

Bosnia & Herzegovina: members provide feedback, new identifications

The article in the June 1998 *Bulletin* about Bosnia & Herzegovina perfin brought some feedback from members—not only to help us identify the nine patterns we illustrated but also to provide details about the use of punches to deface the 1906 issue.

Bob Schwerdt (#505L), **John Nussbickel** (#2002), and **Dick Scheper** (#3311) all contributed identifications for the patterns shown in the article.

Scheper provided improved illustrations of two of the patterns shown in the *World Perfin Catalog* plus a new pattern that isn't included in the *WPC*.

Nussbickel says the K. perfin is a mystery and perhaps should be omitted unless someone can come up with a copy. It is from an old Vojtech Maxa catalog.

Nussbickel also noted that a complete and up-to-date catalog of Bosnia & Herzegovina will be included in his new *Austrian Perfin Catalog* which is currently in work.

The catalog will list only 23 perfin patterns. *WPC* #s A1, A7, A18, A23, A24, and A26 are deleted but one new pattern, the A.B. of Albert Broz, a manufacturer of surgical instruments in Sarajevo is added. The Nussbickel catalog will also include a discussion of the postal history of the region that has continued to be a world trouble spot. Bosnia & Herzegovina will be deleted from the *World Perfin Catalog* when it is updated. The *WPC* is designed to cover those countries which are not the subject of

separate catalogs.

As for the punches on the 1906 issue, several members had comments.

Ray Miller (#3455) writes that he recently won a small lot in an eBay auction which was described as obliterated B&H stamps. He says he picked up four stamps of the 1906 issue (Scott 33, 35, 38 and 41), each punched with two holes (3.5mm diameter) vertically spaced 2.75mm apart. "In addition to the punches, the first three stamps are also crayon-cancelled but the last has only the punches. The underlying stamps were/are in mint condition.

"Each of the stamps is hinged to very small (2.25-in square) individual Globus Stamp Co. approval sheets—original prices were 1, 15, 25 and 50¢—but there are no dates to indicate how long they've been parked there. One approval sheet has the following printed information.

This is one of the famous Bosnia Herzegovina pictorial stamps of 1906. After the war was over and Bosnia became part of Yugoslavia, the Bosnians revenged themselves upon their former Austrian rulers by destroying everything left by them. These stamps were purposely defaced by having holes punched through them and then were ordered sold to remind the world of the intensity of Bosnia's hatred and contempt for everything Austrian.

"How much of that blurb is fact and how much is sales hype is open to conjecture, but at least it substantiates a portion of Prins' comments. One point: the reference to "the war" as opposed to "WWI" narrows the ap-



proval slip down to the 1918-1939 period.

"The next question, of course, is whether something like this is considered to be a perfin, since the stamps were apparently punched to prevent usage, rather than control it."

Ken Stewart (#3245) also commented on the punched stamps.

"The story I have read was that these were remainders. Personally I think they are remainders or printers' waste or both. I have about 20 different of them, perf with gum, imperf without. I also have some with the weird perfs. In addition not all of them have crayon marks.

"The holes I have are punched in pairs. The pair of holes are 7.5 mm apart. I also have holes in two sizes: 4.0 mm and 4.5 mm.

"I like the printers' waste idea because of the imperfs without gum that previously never had gum.

"I like the remainder idea because I have only seen the 1906 issue with the holes and crayon marks. If they were created after the war these defacements would be found on some of the new issues."

The editor welcomes feedback on any topic covered in the Bulletin.

Scott #38 (left) and #45 (right) were among the 1906 issues hole-punched after the country joined Yugoslavia. Just why the holes were punched remains open for discussion.



The A.B. pattern used by Albert Broz is a new addition to the known perfins of Bosnia & Herzegovina. The pattern will be listed in the new edition of the *Austrian Perfin Catalog* due out late this year.